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## **AXIAL SPINAL STABILIZATION**

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### **FIELD ASSESSMENT/TREATMENT INDICATORS**

Any patient in which axial spinal stabilization is clinically indicated, including but not limited to the following:

1. Patient meets Mechanism of injury as described in Protocol reference #15030, Trauma Triage Criteria and Destination Policy
2. Soft tissue damage associated with trauma and/or blunt trauma above the clavicles
3. Unconscious patients where the mechanism of injury is unknown.
4. All pediatric patients under age 8 with King Airway.
5. Cervical pain or pain to the upper 1/3 of the thoracic vertebrae. Spinal tenderness or pain, with or without movement of the head or neck, distal numbness, tingling, weakness or paralysis.
6. Altered mental status.
7. Appear to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs (even if the patient is alert and oriented).
8. Additional sites of significant distracting pain or is experiencing emotional distress.
9. Less than four (4) years of age with appropriate injuries requiring axial spinal stabilization.
10. Unable to adequately communicate with the EMS personnel due to a language barrier or other type of communication difficulty.
11. Any other condition that may reduce the patient's perception of pain.

### **INTERVENTIONS**

1. Apply manual axial stabilization.
2. Assess and document distal function before and after application.

3. For pediatric patients: If the level of the patient's head is greater than that of the torso, use an approved pediatric spine board with a head drop or arrange padding on the board to keep the entire lower spine and pelvis in line with the cervical spine and parallel to the board.
4. For patients being placed on a board, consider providing comfort by placing padding on the backboard.
5. Any elderly or other adult patient who may have a spine that is normally flexed forward should be stabilized in patient's normal anatomical position.
6. When a pregnant patient in the third trimester is placed in axial spinal stabilization, place in the left lateral position to decrease pressure on the Inferior Vena Cava.
7. Certain patients may not tolerate normal stabilization positioning due to the location of additional injuries. These patients may require stabilization in their position of comfort. Additional materials may be utilized to properly stabilize these patients while providing for the best possible axial spinal alignment.

### **LIMITED ALS INTERVENTIONS**

Limited ALS personnel may remove patients placed in axial spinal stabilization by Emergency Medical Responders and BLS personnel if the patient does not meet **any** of the above indicators after a complete assessment and documentation on the patient care record.